



Stags' Leap

RECIPE: WILD MUSHROOM BREAD PUDDING

This recipe heralds the autumnal light. Paired with the Stags' Leap 2000 Merlot Estate Grown Reserve, it celebrates the wild mushrooms and foraged herbs, pungent with the oils that have been gathering all summer. Serve this with your holiday meal, at Thanksgiving or Christmas. It is heavenly with roasted acorn and butternut squashes, the tart lushness of cranberries cooked in wine and oranges, and of course, the wild game or domestic bird.

Butter a 12 inch baking dish, preferably non-metal. Earthenware or glass is best. Butter the dish generously. Sauté about 2 lbs of clean wild mushrooms: *Boletus Edulis*, Chanterelles, Morels, Oyster Tree. You can add Shitake mushrooms as well. Sauté in a large pan in a mixture of butter and extra virgin olive oil. If you have duck fat, that is preferable (use about 1/2 cup). Mince 6 shallots and 2 cloves of garlic; add to oil/butter; sauté till tender; add the mushrooms, a nice handful of fresh thyme, and finely chopped fresh sage. As the mushrooms soften, add 1 cup of sherry, and season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

In a bowl, crack 1 whole egg with 6 egg yolks; add salt and pepper and whisk until fluffy. In a sauce pan, scald (heat just to the boiling point) 1 quart half and half, and 1 pint of cream. Add the milk mixture to the eggs while whisking.



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I prefer Brioche for this recipe. Challa bread will work nicely as well, but you can use any good quality bread, except for rye. Slice bread into 1 inch thick slices and layer the buttered dish until evenly covered; layer with the mushrooms and add custard, till just covered. Repeat the layering. The top of the dish will have mushrooms. Cover in parchment paper and foil and bake in a 375 degree F. oven for 30 minutes, uncover and bake for another 15 minutes until browned. Let it settle a bit before cutting.

Blessings!

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